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warriorhood ". He also states that *Uasto* " is probably the best known and most misconstrued ceremony in the Masai age-grade system ".

Uasto is not performed at a single place for whole Maasiland, but in every territorial section or group of sections. [1] It consists of three main stage: (a) a testing of the candidates by the elders; (b) the election of the ceremonial leader of the unit; (c) a sacrifice of a bull.

a) The first stage takes place in a special hut called *singira*. [2] Not all the candidates, i. e., junior initiates, are allowed into the *singira*, but only those who have kept the sexual regulations which bind junior initiates. In order that no one may enter the *singira* under false pretences the entrance is bewitched by the elders. According to LEAKEY, [3] another test is performed inside the hut aiming at detecting those who have entered surreptitiously.

In the annual report of the *NAD*, [4] we read that every candidate is expected to give " an account " of his past life. " The importance of the *E-Uasto* ", states the same report, " lies in the fact that it imposes an obligation upon a warrior who has disgraced himself in any way to clear himself of the stigma before he can marry and settle down as a respected Elder of the tribe ". " The *O-Singira* " says FOX, [5] " gives the warriors permission to have sexual relations with initiated women ".

b) The nomination of the ceremonial leader (*ol ounoni*, pl. *il ounoi*, or *ol oiuno*) takes place inside the *singira* hut. The elders

[1] LEAKEY's statement, p. 194, that at the *Uasto* " all the members of a given group (i. e., age-unit) from the whole of the Masai country, north, south, east and west are required to be present " is emphatically denied by FOX, p. 441, and FOSBROOKE, p. 39. According to FOX the following sections perform it: (a) Purko; (b) Loita and Siria; (c) Damat; (d) Kapotiei, Loldokilani and Matapato; (e) Laitokitok; (f) Kisongo. And FOSBROOKE says that the *Uasto* is celebrated " by sections or groups of sections " and is attended by as many warriors as possible, " but by no means all ". SANDFORD, on HOBLEY's authority, recorded that the *Uasto* was held by the Purko, Kakonyuko, Dalalekutuk and Damat on the Kinangop. The Sigirari, Matapato, Kapotiei and other divisions where it suited them best.

[2] There are contradictory descriptions of the *singira*. MERKER states that it is a 'very big hut'; BAUMANN says " not so big "; HOLLIS " small ". Leakey and Fox state respectively " an enormous ", and a " very large " hut. Probably it all depends on the actual number of the initiates involved.

[3] LEAKEY, *l. c.*, p. 196.

[4] *NAD*, p. 31.

[5] FOX, *l. c.*, p. 442.

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561 624 and the candidates have previously agreed on the person to be appointed, and the matter is also discussed with the prophet (*laibon*). As in previous cases, these transactions are kept secret because the office is not popular, and the selected man and his family would avoid the election. Only a popular man and a " pure Masai " distinguished for his physical strength, may be appointed *eunoni*. Generally the *sigwenan* is not elected, but in some cases he may be. "

561 624 888 According to MERKER, p. 72, on the day of his official appointment, the selected man is seized and forced to sit on a stool in the centre of the *singira*. He is then clothed wit elders' garments and decorations. FOSBROOKE, " states that soon after his appointment he will be given a wife and cattle by his age-mates.

The unpopularity of the office seems to derive from the fact that the elected man must settle down and behave as an old man as to the peculiar nature of the office. This is described by FOSBROOKE, " and his description sums up the descriptions and statements of all other authorities. " " The duties of the position (of the *eunoni*) are obscure, but as far as is known the *launon* appears to be a sort of scapegoat for the age (unit). If he flourishes and begets many children, and if his cattle prosper and increase, it is a bad omen for the rest of the age (unit). But his adversity will indicate the age (unit)'s prosperity. He must do everything in advance of his age-mates, marry, settle down, make the final payment that binds the marriage. It is as though the *morans* standing on the brink of elderhood, send forth the *launon* as an explorer into the unknown country, so that any bad luck which may be awaiting them shall be focussed on one individual and not on the whole age (unit). But the *launon* is held in great respect by his age-mates, and any demands that he makes must be fulfilled. It is stated that he is the only official whose order must be obeyed. In discussing this with an elder, I pointed out that this should give the office

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" *Ms.* 48, p. 4.

" FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 39.

" FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, pp. 39 s.

" While on p. 39 FOSBROOKE states: *Uasio* " is performed by sections or groups of sections. The Kisongo traditionally perform the ceremony at Magulat near Mosa, i. e., on the eastern slopes of Mondul Mountain, actually in the Arusha district. As many as possible of the age attend, but by no means all ". On p. 34 he writes that " all sections and areas must together for the *uasio* ceremony ". Evidently this statement must be qualified by what he says above.

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great political importance, in reply to which the elder indicated that such did not necessarily follow as 'we can always tell the *launon* what order to give".

c) The sacrifice of a bull is then performed with great ceremonial. HOLLIS, [99] describes the contest in which the candidates compete in getting hold of a horn which was previously thrown into a fire.

With reference to this sacrifice a special officer is appointed. He is called *aboruengene*; he has a ceremonial status and must prepare the hide-rings from the skin of the bull. He is also described by the author of *MS.* 48 as "the official charmmaker of the *moran*". His function, however, seems to be limited to *Unoto*.

Great emphasis is laid by WHITEHOUSE, [100] on what he calls "the fire-drilling ceremony", which as Fosbrooke also says, "must in fact be the *unoto*". The ceremony is described by Whitehouse in connection with the first erection of the segregated village of the initiates or *manyatta*. [101]

The fire is ceremonially lighted by the elders, and it must be carried into the new dwellings of the village. The next morning after this ceremony, the candidates who have become senior initiates are blessed, and prayers to the black God are offered for them. [102]

At the *unoto*, the *aunon* first, and then the other initiates, shave their hair. Pig-tails, however, are again fitted after the ceremony.

Some (four or five) months after the ceremony, when the senior

[99] HOLLIS, *l. c.*, pp. 300 ss.

[100] WHITEHOUSE, *l. c.*, p. 152.

[101] This circumstance supports MERKER's statement that one of the privileges demanded by the junior initiates is the building of their own segregated village, *l. c.*, pp. 35 ss.

[102] It is of some interest to reproduce here from WHITEHOUSE, the prayer recited by the elders on this occasion. It shows clearly how the senior initiates are about to enter the most important stage of their life as members of Masai society. This is the prayer: "Be trustworthy, Oh, return safely, O God. — Become ye ours and of God. — May the illness pass you by. — Wish those who hate us that they may find dry rivers on their journeys. — Lenana and Sufeit and Mbatian wish the safe return. — Grow up. Become possessed of wise heads. Become as great as the Kilimanjaro. — Be the fathers of my children, and bring them up well. Have many wives. — May God love you. May the red bull of the night guard thee. May our age be the bravest". The expression of the first verse "return safely" probably refers to the raid which follows *unoto*. Lenana, Sufeit, Mbatian were prophets.

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561 *Engibata* as the first ceremony for the institution of an age-unit, we may put *Unoto* at an interval of about three or four years; and then *Endungore* some two or three years, or more, after that. [112]

VII – THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE AGE-UNIT

The generic reference made by our authorities either to "the elders" or "the candidates", and so on, may cause the false impression that those engaged in the initiation ceremonies always act as a whole and corporate group. In point of fact, general meetings are rare occasions, and they are also restricted to territorial sections or groups of sections.

561 624 Only a few representatives of the age-units take the most important decisions in connection with the institution of the units.

We have mentioned the *ingopior* or *ingobir*, sg. *engobiro*. These are the best of the age-units initiates. It is they who first approach the elders and assist their own leaders, who usually are selected from among their number. These are, generally, the most senior. According to the information of FOSBROOKE, [113] they form "an [623] inner council for appointing or degrading the *laigwanan*, and for the conduct of important public business". However, "there is no definite office of *engobiro*"; they emerge according to their talents, skill and personality. Thus "they are not necessarily confined to the first batch of initiates", but any one else, even of the last batch, whose qualities excel may be considered an *engobiro*.

The elders here referred to are, as said, the *piron* elders. Their office of sponsors is thus summarized by FOSBROOKE, [114]: "the *il piron*-elders, i. e., the guardians of the youths, have to coach the senior boys in citizenship, taking them to the *laibon*, making them sit at their meetings, etc.".

Of the age-unit leaders (*aigwenani*) FOSBROOKE, [115] distinguishes three kinds, 1. *ol aigwenani loongishu pokin*, lit., the *aigwenani* of

[112] One of the few facts we possess concerning the Samburu is that "the circumcision rite takes place at intervals of seven years". See WEBSTER, l. c., p. 8. For the other tribes in Masai District there are no indications in the various reports of the *NAD* confirming the above period. Cf. the references in *NAD*, 1926 and 1927 with 1932 and 1937 which, however, are very vague to be of any real value.

[113] FOSBROOKE, l. c., pp. 34 s.

[114] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 34.

[115] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 34.

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all the cattle: the chief leader of the ageunit; 2. *ol aigwenani lol kuma orok*; a duly appointed *aigwenani* to whom a black club is presented; 3. *e murt ol aigwenani*, lit. the 'neck of the *aigwenani*', who is the righthand man of the *aigwenani* proper (No. 2), in whose absence no important decisions are taken.

The election of the *aigwenan loongishu pokin* is described by FOSBROOKE, [116] in connection with the *Unoto*. We have noted, however, that his statement in this passage is contradictory. [117] Unfortunately, there is no other authority on the matter, but one gets the impression that the *aigwenan loongishu pokin* is never elected as such: he emerges from among his fellow *aigwenok* as the best man for the office.

The *aigwenan lol kuma orok* is the ordinary leader elected at the *Engibata* by the elders and the *ingobir*. He is elected from a list of prospective candidates. Second to him is his deputy and assistant, namely, " the neck of the *aigwenani* " (*emurt ol aigwenani*).

The *aigwenani* is the leader of the age-unit in his section.

FOSBROOKE mentions the case of some subalterns being elected when the number of the age-unit members in one area is too big and the *ingopir* feel that another leader is needed.

The function of the *aigwenan* is political, military and to some extent judicial, his authority extends to his age-mates of whom he may be said to be " primus inter pares ". [118]

Every *aigwenani*, even the *aigwenani loongishu pokin*, is primarily responsible for his territorial section or group of sections or area for which he has been appointed. He has la foster good relations among members of his age-unit, between his unit and other units either in his or in other sections. He is responsible for seeing the elders and the prophet in order to obtain their approval for *Unoto* and any other ceremony or matter connected with his age unit.

In military activity the *aigwenani* was more important in former times than at present. When large actions were organised and different sections threw their lot together, the various *aigwenok* united according to their seniority. This might have been the occasion

[116] FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 36.

[117] In no description of *Unoto* is there mention of an *aigwenani* being elected. The only officers connected with *unoto* are the *sunoni* or *otuno*, and the *oberuengew*.

[118] Cf. MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 86.

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when the *aigwenani loongishu pokin* was recognised as a general leader. [119]

Judicial activity is not a real part of the *aigwenani's* office. It all depends on his personality and on how much he is favoured by his age-mates, who may ask him to arbitrate and settle their disputes. [120]

The election and the status of the *aunoni-otuno* as the ceremonial leader of the age-unit has already been described. A peculiar duty of the *aunoni's* office is the responsibility " for the smart turnout of the *moran* (initiates) ". [121] MERKER, [122] and HOLLIS, [123] state that the *aunoni* was responsible to the prophet (*laibon*) for the organisation of raids. The anonymous author of *MS.* 48, p. 4, describes him as the mascot of the unit when this was at war: " as long as he is alive they (the unit-members) cannot be beaten by the enemy... For this reason they take him on their raids ".

The relationship between the *aigwenani* and the *aunoni* is not clear. It seems certain that the latter has a more ceremonial and ritual character than the former.

The term of office for all these officers is limited to the existence of the age-unit as such; but they will always be distinguished and sought for their opinion.

The analysis of the unit's leaders does not offer a complete picture of the internal structure of the age-unit. This structure rests on two other institutions, namely the *manyatta*, which is the proper

[119] The *aigwenani* was not epected to take part in the actual fighting; he had to be in the rear to govern the action or, as FOSBROOKE, p. 38, puts it, " probably because the *laigwanan* wore the charm which had been obtained from the laibon, and its loss could not be risked ". At present, adds FOSBROOKE, p. 39, " the relations between senior *laigwanak* and their juniors are very lax. It is probable that this is due to the prohibition of raiding and consequent reduction of the occasions on which large-scale common efforts are required. In the old days when large groups of *moran* (initiates) came together for raids the senior *laigwanak* (sic.) must of necessity have asserted his position, and the others must have obeyed him, to ensure the success of the venture ".

[120] " It appears ", writes FOSBROOKE, p. 38, " to be the privilege of the aggrieved party to select his judges... If a local *laigwanan* han a reputation for fairness and justice, he will be called even from a distance, but proceedings are not invalidated if no *laigwanan* is present ".

[121] FOSBROOKE, p. 40. So, no initiate was supposed to cut off his pig-tail coiffure without the permission of the *aunoni*.

[122] MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 122.

[123] HOLLIS, *l. c.*, p. 299 n. 1.

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may be from 50 to 100; and the anonymous *MS.* 46, p. 8, records that in a *manyatta* there may be from 20 to 30 huts. The extension of the term is not clear. It may be applied alternatively to the whole group forming a *manyatta*, and to a subdivision of this. Thus, we find in *MS.* 48 that each *sirit* is said to have its own 'portion' of the *manyatta*. Similarly, Fox says that each *sirit* is commanded by a captain (*il aigwenan loo sirit*), and that the *manyatta* is ruled by a special leader (*il aigwenan 'l ol poror* = the leader of the age-unis), who is at the same time the captain of his own sirit. [131]

The fact that the members of the *sirit* "as a rule quarrel pretty regularly with other sirit of their *mannyata*" is emphasised by *MS.* 48, p. 3. There is no indication that the internal organisation of the *manyata* is based on the seniority of its members. We may, however, assume quite safely that that is the main principle which regulates the relationship of the *manyatta's* of the two age-units existing at the same period. No special information is available on this point, but it is obvious that members of the two age-units have their own *manyatta's* and we also know that they unite in time of war, the juniors being trained by the seniors.

Seemingly the *sirit* division has a military function and serves to readily organise warriors for raids. MERKER, [132] however, applies the term to a special partnership which two age-mates contract on their way to the battle-field. They pledge themselves to assist each other while fighting. They refer to each other as 'my companion' (*os sirit ai*), and if one of them falls, the other has to rescue his arms. [133] Ten or twelve such companions form a company.

The term *sirit* is further applied to the grouping of initiates who come together for a meat festival (*es sirit ol bul*). This group consists according to MERKER, [134] of five or six age-mates who go to a segregated place where they revel on ox-meat.

The meat festivals (*ol bul*, pl. *e buli*) are held once or twice a month;

[131] Very probably this leader of the *manyatta* is no other than the *aigwenan loi kuma orok*, as indicated. The two different expressions may be taken as describing two different functions exercised by the same person. *Aigwenan loi kuma orok* means lit. "the speaker with the black club", and *'l aigwenani 'il ol poror*, "the speaker of the age-unit".

[132] MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 73.

[133] MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 93: "Die Aufgabe der Gefahrten ist es, dem andern im Kampfe beizustehen und, wenn er fällt, seine Waffen in Sicherheit zu bringen". The spirit as a military company is also mentioned by *MS.* 48.

[134] MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 84.

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system. Unfortunately, no such information is available. MERKER, [141] describes the actual action in detail but from a purely tactical or strategical point of view.

Special distinctions may be attained by the initiates either in military actions or in social life. Thus, if a warrior is outstanding in war for his courage and he "kills many savages" (HOLLIS (a) he is called "the bull", *ol oingok*; if he is liberal and through the assistance of his father "frequently slaughters bullocks" for his comrades, he is called "the benefactor", *N-gamini*. These distinctions as described by MERKER, [142] would suggest the existence of special offices with structural significance. He states that "the bulls" play a leading role (eine führende Rolle), and are the leaders in the fight ("Sie sind die Anführer im Kampf"); "the benefactors" retain a special position (eine besondere stellung). It seems, however, that there are no such institutionalised office as "the Bulls" and "the Benefactors"; they represent two different distinctions which may be attained by any of the initiates. This seems to be the opinion also of HOLLIS, [143] when he states that "the warriors are fond of the titles *'L-oingok* (the bulls) and *'N-gamini* (the generous people), for they may then wear bells or a bracelet called *il-torongen*".

The internal structure of the age-unit, we may now conclude, is based on various principles, which give shape to different groupings.

The essential principle is the contemporaneity of initiation either during the same season in which the minimal age divisions are instituted, or during the same initiation period in which all the minimal divisions merge into a single age-unit.

A second principle is the residential principle, on which the *manyatta* and the *sirit* are organised. The *sirit ol bul*, or the grouping for the meat festival in special segregated huts also seems to be due to this principle.

The military principle seems to give a special military aspect to the *sirit* proper, as found in the *manyatta*, and, apparently, the same principle extends to the temporary capillary formation of special partnership between two fighting warriors.

Corresponding to these various groupings there are leaders, as mentioned above, who organise their age mates in the performance of the various ceremonies and functions of the age-unit. It is very

[141] MERKER, *l. c.*, pp. 93 ss.
[142] MERKER, *l. c.*, p. 86.
[143] HOLLIS, *l. c.*, p. 296.

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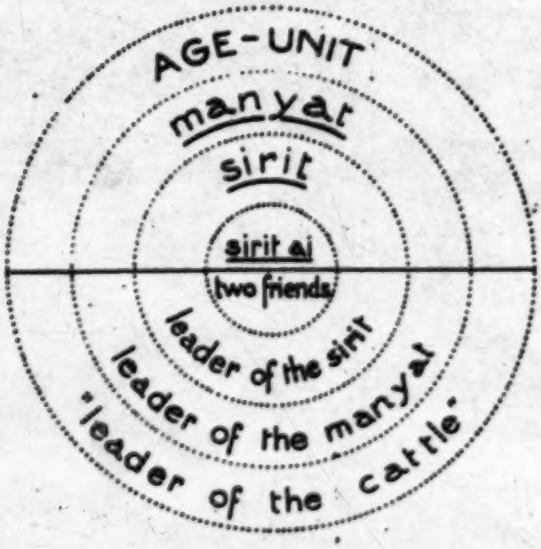
important to note their temporary and personal function. In this connection one should also noth that, however complex the organisation of the age-unit may appear, its character and nature is entirely democratic. The importance of the *ingobir* as a council to the *aigwenan* has never been stressed sufficiently. Although their office is not very well defined, it is a fact that they may exercise a real control over the leaders of the age-unit whom they have power to degrade. [144]

The following diagram illustrates the internal structure of the age-unit.



VIII – THE FUNCTION OF THE AGE-UNIT

The most apparent function of the age-unit is military. This is also the aspect stressed by all our authorities, so much so that it is commonly stated that the function of the age system is military. [145] The evidence we have just analysed suggests a somewhat different description.

We have already noted that the initiates do not become war-

[144] The relationship of the prophet, *laibon*, to the structure of the age-unit and age-class is illustrated below in connection with the latter.

[145] Cf. for all others FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 32: "The basic function of the age-grade system is doubtless military".

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561 of these associations (the age-units) have long been married, the *ol oiboni* (the prophet) binds them more closely by giving a common name to both age-classes [164] each of which, as we have seen, had its own name. This takes place at *ol neher* feast. All the members of the associations come together at the *ol oiboni's* place and build a great kraal near his village. Everybody brings honey for making beer or an ox for meat. This last is then killed by suffocation at the *en gebata* feast. The feast consists in consuming all these things, and its climax is the proclamation by the *ol oiboni* that from now on all the assembled people shall belong to a single *ol adji* (age-class), and have a common class name ".

561 624 FOSBROOKE, [165] states that " a single official, *ol-loo-surutya*, is chosen as the head of the whole generation (age-class), thus symbolising the union of the two ages (age-units) which have up to now been independent, each with its own *launon* or ceremonial leader ".

561 It is after this feast that " those who are not yet married do so at the earliest opportunity. Those who are married, if their fathers [591] are still alive, move off from the paternal *boma* (village); for they are now in complete control of their cattle, and if they stayed with their fathers there would be constant bickering on animal husbandry matters. It is also this feast that " pigtails are cut off and are not allowed to grow again, the new elders may drink milk alone, eat meat that married women have seen, carry about short bladed spears (*embere sero*) in place of the long polished warriors' spears, in fact all the customs of warriorhood are abandoned ". [166] In other words through the *ngeherr* ceremony initiates reach a complete [554] social and economic independence and become full men or elders; they may beget children, own their own stock and build their own village or 'gate'.

There is no doubt that the value of the *Ngeherr* proper for the institution of the age-class is equal to that of *Embolosat*. This is stated by Fosbrooke. [167] He writes: " Just as the Kakonyuke ceremony of *Embolosat* starts off the age (class-period) for the whole tribe (read = the whole Masailand), it appears that the Kissongo *Ngeherr* closes it throughout Masailand ". This value of *Ngeherr*

[164] Read – age-units (my terminology).
[165] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 30.
[166] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 30.
[167] FOSBROOKE, l. c., p. 30.

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is also confirmed by the fact that, as Fox [168] states, " the generation names (i. e. class names) emanate from the Kissongo in Tanganyika Territory and are common to all the Masai. They are given soon after the warriors (initiates) of the two combined ages (age-units) have become elders. Therefore the age-names (i. e. age-unit names) tend to fall into disuse and be replaced by the generation names (i. e. class names) ". (Words in brackets mine).

It should be noted here that the acknowledgement of the Kakonyuke *Embolosat* and of the Kisongo *Ngeherr* by all the Masai is the more remarkable if one considers the tendency of each territorial section to hold ceremonies of its own for the institution of the age-units.

X – THE GENERAL PATTERN OF THE INITIATION CEREMONIES

At this point, when all initiation ceremonies have been studied, it may be of interest to note that the ritual patterns of all these ceremonies, whether their value is territorially sectional or extends throughout Masailand, are essentially similar. Initiation ceremonies are made up of four main elements: *a*) testing and instruction of candidates; *b*) election of a leader; *c*) sacrifice of a bull; *d*) ceremonial fire.

a) The testing and instruction of the candidates is a broad expression which covers various rites performed at different times. It refers to all the ordeals (except circumcision) and confessions which candidates are expected to pass through, and to the instructions, blessings and prayers which the elders impart to, or offer for, their *piron* candidates.

b) Contrary to expectation the office of leader holds no attraction for the candidates. Very probably the reason is that such leaders, or officiers, as the *aigwenani* and *aunoni* are expected to act in a fashion which is not the fashion of their own age-mates at that moment. Indeed they are forced to act as elders when their companions are being recognised as junior or senior initiates. There is no detailed account of the election of the class-leader (*el-lbo-surutya*). If that opposition to office is viewed in the background of the leader's limited and temporary authority in the age system, it may be taken as a further indication that these leaders have nothing in common with political chiefs as found in centralised societies.

[168] Fox, *l. c.*, p. 449.

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ter", he writes, "is by no means clear, but there exist vestiges of a ceremony now practised in conjunction with fertility rites, etc., whereby the senior elders retire and hand over the government to the junior elders". Unfortunately, no details of such "vestiges" are indicated, nor is a similar ceremony mentioned by any other authority. 561

In 1939 FOSBROOKE compiled a census of the class- and unit-members among some of the Kisongo. Above we reproduced the membership figures of the age units; it is now of interest to give the figures of the same census for the age-classes. 561 162

	PLACES	Kibaya	Samatwa	Engasumoti	Longido	Total	
Classes	NYANGUSI	1	–	–	–	1	Old men
	LAIMER	2	1	–	1	4	
	DALALA	14	12	8	23	57	
	DWATI	58	52	23	26	159	Senior Elders
	DARETO	49	69	38	62	218	Junior Elders
	TOTALS	124	134	69	112	439	

The above totals should be compared with the total of the age-units members, which are as follows:

TOTALS	123	159	66	234	582	Initiates

A special officer is elected at the *ngeherr*. He is called *ol-loo-suruiya*.[174] His functions are not very clear. He is described by FOSBROOKE,[175] as having "no duty", though he is held in great 561 624

[174] The name refers evidently to the elder's decorations. The *suruiya* are the ear-rings proper of the elders.

[175] FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 40.

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561 624 respect by all his age-mates. It appears that there is only one such officer for the whole class as there is a single performance of the *ngeherr* proper.

XI – THE PROPHET AND THE INSTITUTION OF THE AGE-CLASS

561 791 "There can be little doubt", writes FOSBROOKE,[176] "that at this time (i. e., in pre-European times) a *laibon*'s chief functions were: i. dispensing charms for raids; ii. supervising and blessing the age grade ceremonies; iii. propounding the ritual and giving charms for local ceremonies, concerned with fertility and disease (both human and bovine) and with [redacted]".

He also remarks,[177] that "although the supervision of the age grade ceremonies has been regarded as an important function of the *laibon*, this activity is subject to curious restrictions, the principle of which I have been unable to ascertain".

It seems to me, on the basis of the foregoing analysis, that the function of the prophet in connection with the institution of the age-units and the age-class is marginal and secondary to the authority of the *piron*-elders, and that it possesses a wholly ritual value. The authority of the prophet does not find a proper place in the structure of Masai age-system. This system is the principle which restricts his activity.

Whenever one of the inititation ceremonies is held, a delegation of the *piron*, both elders and candidates, approaches one of the prophets for his blessing. According to FOSBROOKE's information it does not matter whether the sought prophet is a prophet of the territorial section where the ceremony is performed or of another section or even an "unofficial" *laibon*.[178] The same con-

[176] FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 18.

[177] FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 17.

[178] FOSBROOKE, *l. c.*, p. 17. The passage continues as follows: "For instance the *Ngeherr* or passing out ceremony of the *Dareto* age-set (class) of the Kisongo section was nominally held under Parrit, and the *Unoto* or promotion ceremony of the *Kisale* age (age-unit) under Mbeiya, who were respectively the ruling *laibon* at the material times. But in fact an old Kikuyu adoptee of the Engidong clan, one Lolkokwa ole Kashunga (now deceased) was called to assist in both these ceremonies. By agreement the Mondul *laibon* received the fees in respect of these ceremonies from the Banerera and Kibaya areas, whilst those contributed by the Mondul and Longido Masai went to Lolkokwa at Bisil, Kenya Colony. In another case, Sangoyan, *laibon* of the Kisale age for the Matapatu and Lodokilani sections, which are nominally under Kimurusi".

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opened a vein and drank the blood fresh from the animal. This proceeding of our voracious young friends was a wise though repulsive one, as the blood thus drunk provided the salts so necessary in the human economy; for the Masai do not partake of any salt in its common form. This sanguinary draught concluded, they proceeded to gorge themselves on the flesh, eating from morning till night—and keeping their cook steadily at work. The half-dozen men were quite able to dispose of the entire animal in a few days, and then they returned to the kraal to resume the milk diet.

If they lived an ascetic life in the matter of food, they could not be said to do so in other ways. Life in the warriors' kraal, as may easily be conceived, was promiscuous in a remarkable degree. They may, indeed, be described as a colony of free lovers. Curiously enough the "sweetheart" system was largely in vogue, though no one confined his or her attentions to one only. Each girl, in fact, had several sweethearts, and, what is still stranger, this seemed to give rise to no jealousies. The most perfect equality prevailed between the Ditto and El-moran, and in their savage circumstances it was really pleasant to see how common it was for a young girl to wander about the camp with her arm round the waist of a stalwart warrior.

Till a war-raid was planned, Moran, our interesting *protégé*, found he had nothing to do but make acquaintances and amuse himself with the girls. His cattle were looked after by some poor menials, and though the kraal was stationed near a dangerous neighbour, yet no fighting took place. It was, however, a rule in the warrior kraals that no fence for protection was allowed, hence the utmost vigilance had to be exercised. Moran thus in the course of his duty had frequently to set as watch. At other times he practised various military evolutions, and he kept up his muscle by the peculiar mode of dancing described in the Taveta chapter. Unlike negro tribes, they led what might be called a serious life. They had no rollicking fun, no moonlight dancing, no lively songs, no thundering drums. No musical instrument whatsoever enlivened the Masai life, and their songs were entirely confined to such occasions as the return home from a successful raid, or the invocation of the deity. As soon as darkness fell upon the land the guard was appointed, the cattle milked, and everything hushed up in silence.

Shortly after joining the kraal, Moran was called upon to record his vote in the election of a *Laiyuwa* and a *Laiyonani*.

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The *Lytuna* is a warrior elected by a number of kraals as their captain or leader, with absolute power of life and death. He is their judge in cases of dispute. He directs their battles, though, curiously enough, he does not lead his men, but, like the general of a civilised army, he stands aside and watches the progress of the fight under the direct command of the *Lpyonani*. If, however, he sees symptoms of his men wavering, he forthwith precipitates himself with his body-guard into the battle. Of course he holds his office purely on sufferance, and if he fails to give satisfaction he is summarily deposed. This, indeed, is almost the only attempt at a form of government. Each war-district elects its own *Lytuna*. The *Lpyonani*, again, is a very different personage. He is the public leader of a kraal, leads and guides the debate in cases of dispute. To be such arrogant and pugnacious savages, the Masai are the most remarkable speakers and debaters imaginable. In some American novels we have the Indian belauded for his eloquence and dignity; but commend me to the Masai for grace and oratorical power, for order and decorum in debate; and, indeed, for most of the good qualities which in these days are conspicuous by their absence in our own House of Talking. Not that their genius in this line is always worthily applied; for in their finical persistency in talking out a question they might even beat our Parliamentary Obstructionists. They will spend days discussing the most trivial matter—nothing, indeed, can be settled without endless talk. But we must proceed with our history.

The *Lytuna* and *Lpyonani* having been elected, a raid to the coast was determined on. For a month they devoted themselves to an indispensable, though somewhat revolting, preparation. This consisted in their retiring in small parties to the forest, and there gorging themselves with beef. This they did under the belief that they were storing up a supply of muscle and ferocity of the most pronounced type. This strange process being finished, and the day fixed on, the women of the kraal went outside before sunrise, with grass dipped in the cream of a cow's milk. Then they danced and invoked Ngai for a favourable issue to the enterprise, after which they threw the grass in the direction of the enemy. The young men spent several hours at their devotions, howling out in the most ludicrous street-singer fashion, "Aman Ngái-ái! Aman Mbaratian!" (We pray to God! We pray to Mbaratian!") Previous to this, how-

561 Soon after the *enduogero* ceremony, the elders take three or four of their charges to visit the " medicine man." They take with them three or four new gourds as presents for the " medicine man," who is called *ol-oiboni*. They must also take with them the bark and root of a tree called *imokongoro*. I have not been able to identify the tree; [824] it is said to be scarce and is not found in the Loitokitok area. The root and bark are ground to powder and used to make a medicine named *emasho sirua*, an ingredient used in the preparation of a wide variety of charms. The elders inform the " medicine-man " that they have broken the fire-stick and present the boys to him and say " *Ol piron lang elle, kiro nalo* "—" This is our fire-stick, we are one."

561 On their return home the boys' leaders seek one of their number to appoint as their spokesman called *Ol ai gurenani*. They make no ● 624 special efforts but during the many debates, to which they devote much time, they note those who show special ability; but ability to [537] speak well is not in itself sufficient; there are other considerations of far greater importance.

There are certain families whose sons must not be chosen for they would certainly die if elected; again, the counsel of other families has an evil reputation and must be avoided. Nor would it do to select a spokesman from the *Eudipagi* or medicine-man section or from the clans reputed to be unlucky.

The ideal *l'aigurenani* is one born of Masai parents in Masai country of a family from which *l'aigurenak* of former age-groups have been chosen. He should be wealthy if possible and a member of a lucky clan, must be energetic, not given to favouritism, and known to be fond of his tribe. That he should be an outstandingly good speaker matters not, provided that he satisfies the other conditions. It is said that his efficiency in debate will improve after he is appointed.

The names of possible candidates are submitted to the *il-piron* elders for consideration; the elders do not actually select a boy but prevent any unwise choice being made. The responsibility of making a choice rests with the boys themselves. It is particularly a matter for the leading boys of whom there are probably several by this time. [554] They are called *ingopior*, and are those who have shown ability and strength of character during the many debates already held.

Usually a *l'aigurenari* is chosen from among these *ingopior*. They discuss the matter secretly amongst themselves sending off one of their number on some pretext in order to be able to discuss him freely. When a decision is made the boys call some of the *il-piron* elders and send for the boy chosen. When he comes the *ingopior* say to him: " *Iye kintae ol'aguenani* "—We make you our *aiguenani*. If he

shows reluctance, as he may—for many shun election to the office— he is seized by the boys and held until he agrees. Other boys set off to relate the news to his family. When the family has been informed the new *oiguenani* is presented with his badge of office called *ol kwea orok*—the black club. This club is made of olive wood. It must be quite straight and unlikely to break easily. It need not necessarily be black in colour. The club is blessed by the *il-piron* elders who spit honey wine over it; it is then blessed by the *ingopior* boys in similar fashion and handed to the *l'oiguenani*. He too is spat upon in blessing and prayers are offered that he may have strength, wisdom, and long life. Later the boys present their *l'oiguenani* with a heifer and a goat.

If at any time the boys go against his wishes, the *l'oiguenani* may resign by throwing his club to the ground before a meeting of the boys. Should they be dissatisfied with him they may make him resign by taking away his club. They may even take away the heifer if his offence is severe.

When the boys have elected their *l'oiguenani* the *il-piron* elders take him, together with a few boys to visit the medicine man. The medicine man always accepts the spokesman presented to him, and prepares for him a special medicine called *ol oinpsimpukio*—the red bull. This the spokesman is made to drink; it is said to preserve him from witchcraft of the medicine men. In addition, the spokesman is given various charms for the benefit of the tribe. Possibly one is to prevent rinderpest in cattle, another to cause the cows to calve freely, another to prevent malaria. Usually the charms are sewn in leather bags and are always accompanied by very intricate instructions as to their use. All these charms must be paid for by those who expect to benefit. An instance was related to me of a ceremony held at Loitokitok in 1926 for which a famous medicine man Sendeyo supplied the charm. Its purpose was to prevent the old men of the tribe from dying until they reached a great age. Sendeyo received 40 heifers and bullocks in payment. The medicine man does not state his price but it is usual to pay generously for his services as he is a dangerous person to offend.

Obtaining charms from a medicine man is not a matter to be undertaken lightly. Those who accompany the spokesman are always people of proved intelligence and good memory. Charms are always given with much complicated directions as to their use. If any one of the instructions are overlooked the charm may be rendered useless or may even work evil against its users. The Masai sometimes find that their purchases do not have the effect they desire and report the matter to the medicine man; the latter never fails to point out where an error in the method of its use occurred—and probably effects

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change. To assume eldorhood a Masai must have a wife or wives, and cattle. But the majority of both of these are at present under the control of the elders. How this has come about is recorded in the later section on Clan and Family matters.

The root difficulty is that neither party, the morans nor the elders desire any change; the former are perfectly happy to be in a more or less irresponsible state, the latter naturally unwilling to give up their matrimonial and economic privileges. But there is little doubt that this difficulty can in course of time be overcome, both by constant propaganda and also by economic methods. Thus, if the principle is accepted of using taxation to achieve desirable social ends, a cattle tax might be adapted to ensure a more even distribution of stock among adult males. If such a tax were so graduated that, say, 400 head in a single herd would be taxed at four times the rate applicable when divided into two herds, direct encouragement could be given to an elder to allow his sons to depart with their cattle and to the sons to take over that control, to marry and settle down.

Many other methods of tackling the problem may be devised, but whatever the means there is no doubt that the adaptation of the age grade system is the most urgent administrative problem and the key to political development, increased family stability, improved treatment of women and economic progress.

SECTION IV: TRIBAL OFFICIALS.

A. The Laigwenan and his Assistant: — choice of Laigwenak — visits to the Laibon — installation — unpopularity of office — the head Laigwenan — relations between officials.

The following are brief definitions of the Masai terms involved :—

ol oiguenani, pl. *il oiguenak*. Hollis translates this word as 'counsellor or spokesman.' It is a generic term, and specific appointments bear their own designation, i.e.

ol oiguenani loonpiaku paiire, literally, the laigwenan of all the cattle. The chief lai gwenan of the age.

ol oiguenani lol kuna orok; a duly appointed laigwenan, to whom a black club has been presented.

e murt ol oiguenani; literally, the "neck of the laigwenan," the laigwenan's right hand man, in whose absence no important decisions are taken.

ingoloru, pl. *ingoloi*; the leading men of a given age and area. They form an inner council for appointing or degrading the laigwenan, and for the conduct of important public business.

The officers of an age are not appointed simultaneously, nor do they immediately attain their full status. Some years prior to circumcision, the *il piron elders*, i.e. the guardians of the youths, start coaching the senior boys in citizenship, taking them to the laibon, making them sit at their meetings, etc. These senior boys are the *ingoloi*, and it is their duty, under the guidance of the elders, to choose the laigwenan. At first a

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leigwanan will be chosen for a large area, e.g. Kisenka, including Engasment and Bora. But later, as the number of recruits to the age increases, the *ingabis* of Engasment and Bora will choose leigwanak of their own. These latter will, however, remain in a status of slight inferiority to the leigwanan first appointed. In their own areas they will be virtually independent, but at any communal gathering the senior appointment takes precedence.

This process of sub-division is important, as it not only gives a key to the really influential people, but also accounts for the fact that the areas of leigwanak vary from age to age. For instance, when the Dwati age was in process of formation, numbers were so few that in the whole of Tanganyika there were only three areas, Moliet, Kisesi and Engarroka. In the Darnie age, both the divisions and sub-divisions were more numerous, whilst the number of Kisale candidates justified even more appointments.

The visits to the lairas of the embryo leigwanak and *ingabis* appear to form a large part of their training. Even prior to the selection of a leigwanan, the leading youths are taken by the *il piron* elders, and the lengthy discussions which precede such visits must give the youths good practice in debate. Of these visits Whitehouse writes, "when the boys have elected their *l'aiguenan* the *il piron* elders take him, together with a few boys, to visit the medicine man. The medicine man always accepts the spokesmen presented to him and prepares for him a special medicine called *el ongoimpukin* — the owl bull. This the spokesmen is made to drink; it is said to preserve him from witchcraft of the medicine man. In addition, the spokesmen is given various charms for the benefit of the tribe." It would thus seem, and my informants confirm, that the laiwa has no power of veto over these appointments.

The official installation of the leigwanan may take place immediately after he is chosen, or it may be delayed. This in some cases occurs before, and in others after, circumcision. An assembly is summoned for the ceremony; the *ingabis* of the moran and the *il piron* elders are the chief participants, but others drawn both from these and from the remaining ages are naturally present. A black club is prepared beforehand, which forms the centre of the ceremony. In some accounts a cow with a female calf at heel is brought in, and its milk smeared on the right arm and on the club of the leigwanan, the divine blessing being invoked, and prayers offered that the new leigwanan may rule his people with strength and justice. Other accounts replace the milk with beer, and state that the milk used not be that of the mother of the calf, which incidentally the leigwanan keeps, but that it must be such-and-such a coloured cow. Again, others say that the club must be bound with green grass. The details are immaterial, but the ritualistic nature of the ceremony indicates that the office is regarded as one of permanency and importance.

The discussions preceding the choosing of a leigwanan never take place in the presence of possible candidates. For frequently they will refuse to undertake the work, and will run away if they know beforehand that they may be chosen. The chosen one may even throw down the

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club — a gesture of resignation, — when it is presented to him, but is less likely to do so if taken by surprise.

The second favourite in the discussions usually becomes the *ensurt* of the chosen laigwanan, but there is no definite appointment or installation ceremony.

It appears that there is no laigwanan of the whole age until all sections and areas meet together for the *ntoto* ceremony. Here one man is singled out to be head laigwanan of the age in respect of all sections attending the ceremony. Thus at the time of writing Lesimbe is nominally the head of all the Kisale of Moitos, Kitoto, Laitokitok, Engaruka, Salei and Serengeti sections. But except when all meet together, he carries little weight in any but his own section. He does not appear to keep in touch with his (nominal) subordinates in other sections, nor even with the leading laigwanak of the Moitos of other areas, — Mondul, Ngorongoro and Nakarara — which are thus, in respect of the Kisale age, practically separate sections. Lesimbe claims, however, that a deputation from the Laitayok of Laitokitok came to consult him about their standing down, but he took no decision, and referred them to the *laiyuni*, the ceremonial head of the age, at Mondul.

The relations between the senior laigwanan of an area and his juniors are only important when all are concerned in a common matter. In most affairs, once a sub-area has a laigwanan of its own, it acts as an independent unit. It will send its own deputation to the laibon, and perform its own local ceremonies. But when an occasion arises when the whole area are in concert, e.g. payment of *ngabare* cattle or assembly to greet a visiting laibon, the senior man takes precedence. But the relations between the laigwanan, his *ensurt*, and the *ingabir* in any particular sub-area are much more close. The laigwanan should take no important decision except in the presence of his *ensurt*, whose duty it is to prevent him from taking any rash step. The *ingabir* also play a large part in local politics, for it is their duty to depose an unsatisfactory laigwanan, or to choose a successor to one who has resigned. But there is no definite office of *ingabiro*. As Whitehouse says " . . . they are those who have shown ability and strength of character during the many debates . . . " For this reason they are not necessarily confined to the first batch of initiates in any age. For amongst those circumcised later, youths of ability and strength of character are bound to emerge who will be taken into the confidence of their seniors and so come to rank as *ingabir*.

This process of strong characters emerging after the age has been formed continues during elderhood. In areas recently opened to settlement, as for instance Longido, elders will emerge as leaders who are in effect laigwanak or *ingabir*, though lacking the title. It appears that once a laigwanan has reached elderhood he cannot thereafter be deposed. But a forceful character who is desirous of undertaking the work may in effect deprive the laigwanan of his position, and the Masai are, in fact, glad to accept anyone who is willing to undertake by no means always popular duties.

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B. The duties of Laigwanak — in theory — and in practice — influence in raids and war — position in regard to individual disputes.

One method of discovering the duties of the laigwanak is to ask them what they regard as their task. This method does not necessarily show what they actually do in practice, but it gives a very good idea of their own conception of the office. Placed by different informants in different orders, the following list represents the majority of the answers given :—

(a) To collect cattle for, and organise deputations to the laibon.
(b) To represent their age in disputes with other ages, and to prevent such disputes from developing into fights.
(c) To lead their people in war, or now-a-days, to prevent them going on raids, (probably a slip to the questioner).
(d) To settle individual cases — payment of debt, compensation, blood-money, etc.

One old gentleman, whose duties as laigwanan take him from his boma perhaps once or twice a year, imagined himself so over-worked that he described a laigwanan's duties as being like those of a housekey!

The above are specific duties, but what may be called the guiding principles were best summed up by the Kisale laigwanan of Loongonot — "a laigwanan does not like to see a poor man robbed by a rich, or an old man oppressed by a young one."

But how far are these principles lived up to in practice? How are the above duties fulfilled? The organisation of deputations to the laibon, if informants are to be believed, fell in the old days mainly on the laigwanan of moran, as when he went to get charms for war, or to take the laibon his share of raided stock. But now-a-days this duty falls on all ages except the very senior, i.e. from Dalala upwards. If one age, say Dareto, thinks it good to send a deputation to the laibon in conjunction with the other ages, the Dareto laigwanan will call the Kisale and Dwati laigwanak and ingobir to a meeting. Here it will be decided how many cattle each will contribute, and when the deputation will depart. Thereupon the leaders of each age call a separate meeting, and decide who shall go to the laibon, and who shall contribute cattle. It is the meeting and not the laigwanan which decides these points, but the laigwanan, having obtained his position by virtue of his strength of character, probably has more say in the matter than the others. Considering that these cattle are often in the nature of fines, and that a journey to the Laibon at Mondul is frequently unpopular, it is a tribute to the Masai organisation that such meetings pass off peacefully. No instance is on record of a single dispute coming to official notice arising from such cause. The laigwanan does not necessarily escort the deputation, but quite frequently he does. On the return of the deputation a meeting is again held to hear a report of the laibon's message, and, if a local ceremony has been decreed, to make arrangements for holding it. In any given area it is improbable that a single year passes without the dispatch of a deputation, or the holding of a local ceremony. So, considering the time it takes a Masai meeting to reach a decision, these duties must occupy a considerable — but not inordinate — proportion of a laigwanan's time.

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By the very nature of the Masai organization, inter-age disputes are bound to crop up periodically (see Age-grades). In the 'Promotion' dispute between the Kisale and the Meriako of the Monduli area in 1938, the respective laigwanak played a considerable part, not only at their own meetings, but in reporting decisions to the District Office.

In the old days it was the duty of the laigwanan to assemble his people for war, and to settle the disputes which inevitably arose when the spoils were divided. But by custom he should not enter into the actual fight, but remain in the rear with a small body-guard. This is probably because the laigwanan wore the charm which had been obtained from the laibon, and its loss could not be risked. It is difficult to say what part the laigwanak play in what they regard as their present-day duty, namely the suppression of raiding. Very probably in respect of large-scale raiding they have considerable influence. If any area were openly considering a major raid, and the laigwanan agreed to it, many would join in against their better judgment; but if the laigwanan discouraged it, the project might well be dropped.

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Generally speaking it is unusual for a laigwanan to interfere in an individual dispute without invitation. It appears to be the privilege of the aggrieved party to select his judges. He brews beer, perhaps slaughters an ox and calls in neighbouring elders, together with the defendant. If a local laigwanan has a reputation for fairness and justice, he will be called even from a distance, but proceedings are not invalidated if no laigwanan is present. If the defendant fails to turn up, the assembled elders will none the less discuss the case, and if the claimant's suit is well founded, they will tell him so. He in his turn will go and tell the defendant that the elders have given judgment in his (the claimant's) favour. This may be sufficient to induce the defendant to pay up, but as often as not he will refuse. The claimant may then muster his morans, and take his claim by force, in which case the defendant will call a meeting and claim the return of property wrongfully removed from his boma. And so the circle starts again. Or the matter may be allowed to drop, to be re-opened after a year or two, possibly on the appearance of some new witness.

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To sum up the laigwanan's position in relation to the dispensation of justice, it cannot be said that he holds a formal position in the judicial system. He is sought as a judge by virtue of his qualities and not of his position. Nor is this aspect of his duties irksome, since a case means a social gathering, and attendant hospitality. The position is different of course in the case of laigwanak who are at the same time paid 'Native Authority' officials. When the assistance of such people is required, it has become customary to take the case to them in their own boma.

The above description is intended to convey some idea of how far the laigwanak do in practice fulfil the duties imposed on them. The duty of helping the poor and oppressed seems to be honoured in the breach. The deputations to the laibon appear to occupy the major portion of the time which a laigwanan devotes to public duty, but even here the time he spends is little more than that spent by the average elder of the area.

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The organisation of these deputations is actually a magico-religious rather than a political duty — that is, from our point of view — to the Masai it is just one aspect of the general theme of ensuring peace and prosperity to the area.

It will also be noted that there are very few duties which might be called executive. The laigwanan does not enforce judgments, or visit kraals collecting cattle for the laibon — the matters are discussed in open moran and the weight of public opinion compels the individual to act as required. When this fails there is nothing to take its place. This explains why the laigwanak often make unsatisfactory paid headmen. Frequently the action required of a headman has not got this necessary weight of public opinion behind it, and consequently there is no indigenous method of enforcing an order.

The relations between senior laigwanak and their juniors are very lax. It is probable that this is due to the prohibition of raiding and consequent reduction of the occasions on which large-scale communal efforts are required. In the old days when large groups of moran got together for raids the senior laigwanak must of necessity have asserted his position, and the others must have obeyed him, to ensure the success of the venture. With decreased opportunities of asserting his position, it is natural that the power of the laigwanan should itself decrease.

Another tendency to be noted is the manner in which laigwanak move from their areas, more especially during elderhood. A senior laigwanan of the Kitoto lives at Naberere, one from Engare Nanyuki at Ngorongoro, another from Engaruka at Piaya, each at least a hundred miles away from the people they are supposed to lead. This is only another aspect of the break-up of the sections previously recorded, but it does illustrate the loss of old loyalties.

C. Other officials — the launon — magico-religious position — his duties — the ol bore engwe — the lunurutya.

At the unoto, or promotion ceremony, there is chosen an official known as the Launon, — *ol nanono* pl. *il nanok*, — or Olotuno. He is acknowledged by all the sections which attend the unoto, as their ceremonial or religious head. The position is not popular, so the candidate has to be installed by compulsion. After appointment the launon takes on the mode of living of an elder, being given a wife and cattle by his age-set.

The duties of the position are obscure, but as far as is known the launon appears to be a sort of scape-goat for the age. If he flourishes and begets many children, and if his cattle prosper and increase, it is a bad omen for the rest of the age. But his adversity will indicate the age's prosperity.

He must do everything in advance of his age-mates, marry, settle down, make the final payment that binds the marriage. It is as though the moran, standing on the brink of elderhood, send forth the launon as an explorer into the unknown country, so that any bad luck which may be awaiting them shall be focussed on one individual and not on the whole age.

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But the launon is held in great respect by his age-mates, and any demands that he makes on them must be fulfilled. It is stated that he is the only official whose order must be obeyed. In discussing this with an elder, I pointed out that this should give the office great political importance, in reply to which the elder indicated that such did not necessarily follow, as " we can always tell the launon what order to give !"

Hollis states that the launon is responsible to the laibon for the appearance of the moran in case of war; this may well have been so in the old days, for it is generally admitted to-day that he is responsible for the smart turn-out of the moran. Thus unless in cases of sickness or mourning, a moran is not supposed to cut off his pig-tail without the launon's permission. It is alleged, however, that the office is losing its status and authority, for whereas the Darvio age launon is supposed to have gone on frequent 'tours of inspection' and to have inflicted many fines, nowadays many Kisale shave their heads without consulting their launon.

During elderhood, by virtue of his previous position, the launon is still held in respect, though no specific duties seem to attach to him. He may perhaps play some part at the unoto and ngeherr ceremonies of the age next-but-one- below, by virtue of the ol piron relationship.

Another official chosen at the unoto is called *ol buro engese*, who splits the skin of the ceremonially slaughtered ox. He is given four or five cattle as a fee, and in after life is held in respect, but appears to have no duties.

At the ngeherr ceremony, an official, the *Loeurutya*, is chosen in respect of the whole generation, whose position corresponds to that of the launon at the unoto. As there is only one ngeherr ceremony for all sections of the Masai, so there is only one loeurutya. No duties, but considerable respect, appear to attach to the office in after life.

CLAN ORGANIZATION CHART.

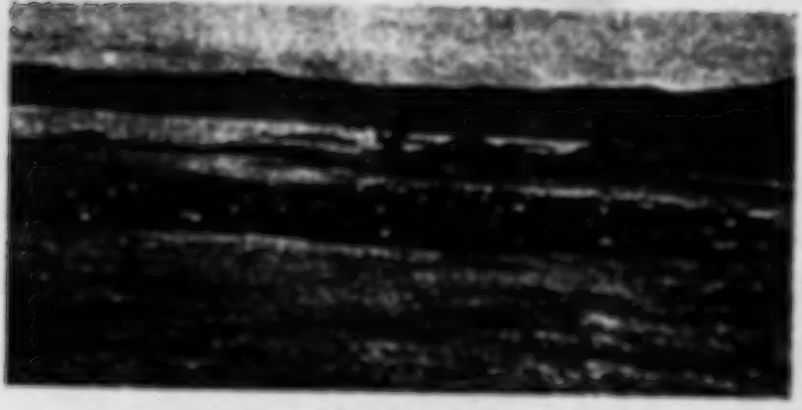
GROUPS	CLANS	SUB-CLANS
Endaloshi	Englishemo	Oiglata
	I. Engaja Masai.	
LAISER or LOOROKITENG (right hand)	LAISER	Englidong Parkimat Parsingo Engaja-Nanuki or Lumbo-gluku Partimarai Parsa Buko
	LUGHUMAI	Olmoro Enr-engidim

9:Fosbrooke G-5 (1936-1948) 1948 FL12 Masai FL12
Kisonko

624
301

A PROMINENT LANGWANAN AND TWO OF HIS WIVES.
Olilenkem ole Meniya of Ngorongoro area.

361



LANGWANAN OLTIMBAU'S 'BOMA'
showing grouping of huts and cattle by 'gates'.

[Facing p. 42]

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

the nine days the elders in charge of the ceremony go about looking out for two warriors from the group noted for their humility and honesty, and having selected them they keep their names very quiet, as the position for which they are being chosen is not at all sought after. In fact, as soon as the selection has been made, the relations of the two men chosen are heavily bribed in order that they shall allow them to be appointed.

Shaving Ceremony.—On the tenth day of the ceremony the heads of all the warriors of the age-group are shaved, and during the shaving the elders come and point out the two warriors whom they have chosen, and publicly proclaim them as the heads of the group during its time in the senior warrior stage. These two men are called respectively *olutunot* and *olobonsenguse*, and there are certain very strict regulations and restrictions attached to their position, the breaking of which would result in punishment by death; hence the unwillingness of the warriors to be chosen for these appointments, and the bribing of their relations. Unfortunately, no information about the duties of these two, or of the restrictions which they must observe under penalty of death, could be obtained from my informants. After the shaving ceremony is over and these two have been appointed, the warriors go back to their normal life; but before doing so they first go all together for a few nights to a new village built for the purpose called *ngang'eparithi*, and from there they scatter to their own districts. They may not, however, return to their old *manyattas*, which they vacated when they came to the *Eunata* ceremony, but must build new *manyattas*.

Becoming Elders.—The length of time spent in the senior warrior class depends entirely upon whether a man belongs to an age-group called *jangicuobur* or *murutogedienge* (*see* the Age-group system). Transfer from the senior warrior stage to the Elders' stage takes place as a group transfer, but one age-group cannot transfer alone, but always two groups, a *jangicuobur* and a *murutogedienge*, must transfer together. No transfer, therefore, can take place until there are two age-groups in the warrior stage who have gone through the *Eunata* ceremony. Once there are two such groups in the senior stage the actual time of transfer is dictated by whether or not there is a new age-group waiting in the novice stage ready to move up into the junior warrior stage, for as stated above (*see* the Age-group system), there may never be more than three age-groups in the warrior stage at one time. Equally no two warrior groups may move out into the Elders' stage until there is a new age-group in the novice stage, as otherwise it would mean leaving a single age-group alone in the warrior stage for too long, and this would be a serious thing when only the warrior groups are the fighting forces of the tribe. The actual transfer from the senior warrior stage to the Elders' stage takes place without any ceremonial, and the men just leave their *manyattas* and go and live with their wives, with whom as yet they have never lived, although the wives may be mothers with several children (*see* Marriage).

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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561 634 624 *Sirit.*—The age-group of each section forms one or more *sirit* or companies. Each *sirit* has its *Aigwenan*, who performs some of the duties of a captain. The word literally means counsellor. One of the captains is considered to have authority over all the age-group as well as his own *sirit*, and he is called *'L-Aigwenan l'ol poror* in contrast to the others who are *'L-aigwenak loo sirit*.

As an example of the *sirit* divisions, the Il Kitoip age-group of the Purko has three *sirits*—Il-Meshuke, 'L-Aitetti and Il-Kanyaru.

When the warriors become elders the *Aigwenak* usually retain their authority.

(a) Generation-names common to all the Masai:—

Il Nyangusi. Very few survivors now.
Il Aimer.
Il Tolala.
Il Tuati. The present ruling elders and *Ol piron* to the present warriors.
Il Tareto (?). This is believed to be the new name given to the groups who have most recently become elders. It had not come into general use in Narok District when I left last May. I therefore give below the various age-group names of the warriors of this generation:—

(b):—

Section.	Purko.	Loita and Siria.	Kakonyuko.	Il Damat.
Il Tuati — Right hand	Il Merutorot.	Il Kishangop.	Il Meshuke.	Il Merutorot.
Il Tuati — Left hand	Il Kitoip.	None.	I Rayani.	Il Kitoip.
Il Tuati — Right hand	Il Sabuuk.	I Rimirim.	?	?

Section.	Kabutei, Lodopillani, Matapato.	Il Dalalagutuk.	Laitokitok.	Kisongo.
Il Tuati — Right hand	Il Aitetti.	?	Il Kibumi	?
Il Tuati — Left hand	None.	?	None.	Il Keriankat.
Il Tuati — Right hand	?	?	?	?

Some of the names are omitted because they have not yet been given, and others, e.g. the Il Dalalagutuk, because I have not had anything to do with that section for some years.

An *Aigwenan* appears to be chosen in the first instance by the elders, but if he proves unsatisfactory the warriors sometimes exert themselves successfully to get him changed.

561 *Ol Piron.*—The elders of the generation next but one senior to another generation are said to be the *Ol Piron* of that generation. Thus the *'L Aimer* are *Ol Piron* of the *Il Tuati* and the *Il Tuati* are *Ol Piron* of the present warriors, e.g. *Il Sabuuk*.

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
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561 884 The *Loita* and *Siria E-Unoto* ceremony took place in July, 1929, and lasted three days. They invited me to it, but, owing to pressure of political work, I was unable to arrive till the morning of the third day at about 10 a.m. (Pl. XIII, Figs. 1-3, and Pl. XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

The Masai definition of the *E-Unoto* is as follows:—

"The *E-Unoto* is a religious ceremony of blessing of the age-group, after which the warriors have leave to marry.

"The *O-Singira* gives the warriors permission to have sexual relations with initiated women."

The warriors were dancing at the time (Pl. XIII, Figs. 1 and 2). After about an hour they went off to a spot about a mile away in the forest, where I was [189] informed that they sacrificed a bullock as a charm.[1] They returned about 3.30 p.m., [187] about twenty of them being dressed in a manner similar to that of the three functionaries (Pl. XIII, Fig. 3). They danced round the *O-Singira* hut, and those warriors who were entitled to enter it led their families up to smear some cow-dung on it. The warriors then squatted down in a close group in the centre of the *manyatta*, while some elders walked round them drinking honey wine and spraying it out of their mouths over the group as a blessing. Others of the elders sat by the *O-Singira* hut and refreshed themselves with honey wine. It was at this point of the proceedings that the age-group of warriors was named *Irimirim* (from verb *arim*, pierce). This terminated the festival.

561 884 624 The chief functionary is the *Ol-Oiwa*, but I cannot say what part he takes, having arrived so near the end of the ceremony. He is held in great reverence for ever afterwards, and it is unlucky for the age-group if a mishap befalls him. He must not take part in political affairs. He is always spoken of as *Ol-Oiwa*, and his son, when he grows up, is known as the son of *Ol-Oiwa*. (Pl. XIII, Fig. 3.)

There is a minor official called *Ol-Oiler engidne*. *Eng-dne* is a thong of leather. If my spelling of the first part of the title is correct it would perhaps mean "He who splits the thong." But there are several words from which it might derive, and I have no knowledge of his duties to assist me in checking my spelling of the name.

561 346 [361] [339] *O-Singira* (*Thingira*).—Being ignorant of Kikuyu I had been puzzled by this word prior to reading Mr. Leakey's article. At the *Loita E-Unoto* it was built just within the eastern edge of the village. The village consisted of a circle of huts about 300 yards in diameter. I looked in to the *O-Singira*, but it was too dark to see anything. It was made of cow-dung plaster like an ordinary hut, but was much bigger. Ranged against the wall outside were the heads of numerous oxen which the warriors had slaughtered.

561 884 I was informed that 109 of the warriors had not had sexual relations with initiated women and could therefore enter the *O-Singira*. After the *E-Unoto* the

[1] Masai, *Enkidingoti*, the general word for a charm.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

and Il-Merisho are recorded by Fosbrooke from the Kisonko: the first is given by Hollis as occurring in 1806 among the Masai, and in 1774 among the Taveta; the second, in 1874 among the Masai, and in 1870 among the Taveta. Moreover, all the names in Hollis's list from Il-Merisho in 1874 to Il-Kinyoyo in 1791 are found in the Taveta system (Lumerisho, 1879, going back to Lukinyoo in 1684 by 15-year intervals).[11] This repetition of names suggests the possibility of an original cyclic system.

The actual working of the Masai system is still not absolutely clear, but Fosbrooke has done much towards solving the problem. The main facts seem to be as follows. A boy is not born into a set, as among the Nandi, for his set does not come into existence as a named group till after circumcision. About two years before a circumcision takes place, the elders of the set immediately senior to the existing warrior group (*el-oja*) start the process of inaugurating a new set, at a ceremony called *en-polosata*; this, as we have seen, is described by Hollis as a ceremony performed by individual fathers (p. 116 above), while Fosbrooke regards it as a national ceremony performed by the *Il-kork-onyokie* in Kenya as a common ceremony for all Masailand. The elders who take part in the inauguration become the sponsors, *il-piron* (lit. "fire-sticks"), of the new set, and the guardians and instructors of the initiates, thus corresponding to the Nandi *motorwek*. The *en-polosata* is followed by a ceremony called *en-dapore*, "the cutting," which closes the current period of circumcision; at this ceremony the formal relationship of instructor and initiate is established. After this, there follows a series of activities called *en-kipasta*, beginning with a dance which gives its name to these activities.[12] Between now and the opening of the circumcision the boys go round collecting candidates for initiation. In each circumcision area the *il-piron* and a few boys also go to the tribal laibon, and apply for his sanction to open the circumcision. When they return, the boys elect a representative called *el-aiguenani* (pl. *il-aiguenak*), "the counsellor," who must have special qualifications of birth, physique, and social status, and is chosen from among those of their number who have distinguished themselves in the debates which are held frequently, and are in consequence called *isik-ojin*.[13] The duties of the *el-aiguenani* are to act as intermediary between the warrior company to which he will presently belong and the laibon, to maintain liaison with other companies, to arbitrate in disputes, and to organize raids. He is confirmed in his office by being given a black club which has been blessed by the *il-piron* elders.

Each age-group or "generation," *el-oji* (pl. *il-ojijik*), is divided into two age-sets, *il-parroni* (sing. *el-parror*), the first or senior known as *e-murrata e-iaiyor*, "the right-hand circumcision," the second or junior as *e-murrata e-kedienya*, "the left-hand circumcision." Those of the Right Hand are circumcised first over a period of four years, and when the circumcision is finished the young warriors divide into *i-aini* or companies formed on a territorial basis, each of which has its own barrack, *e-manyata*. Soon after this, the preliminaries for the formation of the next *el-parror*, the Left Hand, are undertaken, i.e., the *en-polosata*, *en-dapore*, and *en-kipasta* as for the previous *el-parror*. About seven years from the beginning of their circumcision period the Right Hand become senior warriors by means of a ceremony called *e-nanio*, "the setting up," for as junior warriors, during the three years or so between the end of their circumcision and the *e-nanio*, they have begun to fight the senior warriors (of the previous *el-parror*) for the full privileges of warriorhood. Then they get by means of the *e-nanio*, and at the same time they elect a ceremonial leader called *el-oiboni* (Kisonko, *el-mwonai*). As senior warriors they may marry. About eight years from the beginning of the Right Hand circumcision the Left Hand

[11] The Taveta are a Bantu tribe living to the east of Kilimanjaro; they have strong Masai connections.

[12] *En-kipasta* also means a dance held by warriors before a raid.

[13] *Isik-ojin* means "certain brothers," and indicates seniority, as in the term *il-ongos-ojin* applied to the senior division of each age-set. The *isik-ojin* are the lieutenants of the *el-aiguenani*.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

Political Structure

Land Divisions and Authorities

The basic unit of a tribe, *ol-oiko*, is the *sirit* or warrior company in its *manyata*, for it represents a district from which a given number of fighting men is drawn; and within this district are also the kraals, *enk-ang*, of the elders. The formation of an *enk-ang* varies. It may contain a group of men who continue as elders the association which they began as warriors in the *manyata*; or it may be a casual grouping which can break up and re-group; and it may contain anything from one to 10 gates. Within the *enk-ang* a rudimentary council seems to exist with one of the elders at its head; it may be no more than the heads of families sitting together and talking. Such as it is, it corresponds to some extent to the Nandi *kokwet*, though its powers and sphere are smaller. But it differs also in an important respect. All the inhabitants of a Nandi parish, including the warriors, come under the jurisdiction of the *kokwet*, whereas in the Masai system the local warrior company has its own authority, the *ol-aiguenani*, who is responsible for the maintenance of both military discipline and "civil law" within his company, and his warriors appear to be independent of the elders' councils. When the age-set has passed out of the warrior stage, the *ol-aiguenani* remains its authority. A number of *sirit*-districts forms the larger unit, *ol-oiko*, which English writers call the section or division, the latter being the word used by Sandford. Each of these *il-oikos* has a council of elders which corresponds in some respects to the Nandi *pororiet* council; and, as will be seen from p. 11 above, the *il-oikos* are associated either in loose confederacies with a group-name, like Il-Purko, Il-Damat, and Il-Kerk-o-nyokie, which together form the Il-Kinyapp, or in distinct "tribes" like Il-Aikipiak, Samber. The organization of the Samber seems to have developed on slightly different lines from the rest of the Masai.[*] The *enk-ang* is the homestead of one elder and his wives and children; a number of such homesteads forms a local group with a council of elders, and the total number of local groups is divided among eight sections called *il-mavoita* (sing. *ol-mavo*), each with a council made up of the leaders of the component group-councils. These *il-mavoita* are divided into two large sections with "cattle-names": the Il-oo-nok-kidon, "the black cattle," contains the *il-mavoita* of Lo-l-punio-kidon, Lo-l-gumi, Ol-masilo, and Nyapurai; and the Il-oo-ibor-kidon, "the white cattle," contains the sections called Il-oo-nok-kidon, Lo-l-kumai, Lo-l-masai, and Lo-gelli.

The most important figure in Masai organization is the *ol-aiguenani*, whose duties in the past were to make the practical arrangements for war, to control the distribution of the loot, to settle disputes when appealed to, to lead his men in war, and to maintain liaison between his company and the laibon on the one hand, and between his company and other companies on the other. But he could resign if displeased with his men, who in turn could dismiss him if not satisfied with his actions. Now that there is no more organized warfare, the duties of the *ol-aiguenani* are mainly confined to the suppression of raiding, in which his effectiveness depends on his character, influence, and disposition; and to settling disputes, in which he is assisted by the elders of the district. Thus a council system with an elected leader has developed out of the older structure in which the *e-manyata* and *enk-ang* were semi-independent bodies. As among the Nandi, it is the personality of the *ol-aiguenani* and the force of public opinion that compel obedience to him. But the whole Masai system is less clear-cut than even that of the Nandi, in spite of the apparent dictatorship of the *ol-aiguenani*, though in certain respects he is analogous to the Alus Boku or age-set ruler of the Galla, who is the tribal ruler for a period of eight years.

The Laibon

The laibon, a word anglicized from *ol-oiboni*, pl. *il-oibonok*, and derived from *o-ibor*, "to make 'medicine,'" is a ritual expert who practises divination and rain-[illegible]

[*] Information from the Rev. Charles Richmond of the C.M.S.

13:Huntingford E-4 (no date) 1953 FL12 Masai FL12

the laibons into three categories: (1) the private practitioner, who works in a small way as a diviner and doctor among a limited circle of clients; (2) the private practitioner who has gained a wider reputation and is consulted by several districts, and includes rain-making among his activities; and (3) the senior laibons, of whom there is one to each tribal group; these all belong to the In-Kidoŋi sub-clan of the Il-Aiser clan, and the different tribal laibons were all fellow-clansmen, if not actually related. Thus, in addition o the laibons of the Kaputie at Ngong (now living among the Loitai), the Kisonko, Il-Aikipiak, Il-Wuasin-kishu and Sambur also had their own; though it is possible that the Ngong laibon had a higher standing throughout Masailand than the others. In pre-European days the functions of a head laibon were[1] (1) to sanction wa and to provide protective medicine for those taking part in it; (2) to authorize th ceremonies connected with the age-sets and circumcision; (3) to ensure the fertility nd well-being of his people; (4) to make rain. In the exercise of these duties he is oth an intermediary between man and the other world, and a mystical focus for tribal activities. Many laibons also practise witchcraft (as defined above, p. 39). Bt the laibon is not a chief, and his authority depends on his mystical powers.

War Organization

When the warriors of a *sirit* wanted to raid, they approached their *ol-aiguenani*, who planned the attack and arranged for the co-operation of other companies if a big raid (*ol-orora*) was intended. The *il-aiguenak* concerned then went to the laibon to get his sanction nd protective war medicine. Before agreeing, however, the laibon consulted the omens to see if the circumstances were propitious; and having done so, he gave his consent, sometimes in song after getting drunk. The warriors then went to their *il-pul* and feasted on meat to prepare them for the raid; patrols were also sent out, and when all was ready the party set out by the shortest route to their destination. Raids were made on most of the tribes round them, and extended to the coast, the Nika being a frequent objective; Thomson was told that a Masai patrol was once seen in Mombasa itself. On their return, the raided cattle were divided. First, a number were set aside for the laibon; then some were given to those who had distinguished themselves; the rest were divided among the warriors who gave one or two to their lovers in the *manyata*, but handed the rest of their shares to their families. If there were not enough cattle to divide fairly, the warriors separated into two groups, *il-oo-rok-kiteg* and *il-oo-do-mogi*, "the black ox" and "the red ox," nd fought for the spoil. Small raids, *ol-ouampa*, carried out locally by one *sirit* were not referred to the laibon, who received no share of the spoil.

Wars between Masai tribal groups were frequent, and formed one of the factors in the disintegration of the Kenya Masai at the end of the 19th century. In such wars, large numbers of men were collected in camps, such as Thomson saw in 1883 near Elmenteita, where two large collections of warriors (he put the number at about 3,000 on each side) were camped a short distance from each other, one camp being that of the Kaputie the other of the Il-Aikipiak. A detachment of picked men from each side would come out and fight a pitched battle, cheered on by their women-folk, the winning side taking the cattle of the vanquished. The basis of military discipline was pride, strengthened by fear and respect of the laibon, and fear of public disapproval. The Masai also had some idea of drill and of acting in unison. Gorged with meat and decked in the panoply of ostrich-feather head-dress, cape, gleaming spear, shield, sword, club, painted face and leg ornaments, the Masai warrior felt himself more than a match for anyone.

Prisoners were not often taken, though sometimes a man would capture a woman whom he would make his wife, or a child whom he would adopt. Men were killed, women seldom. Peace was made by a formal ceremony at which nursing mothers

[1] Fosbrooke, pp. 13-17.